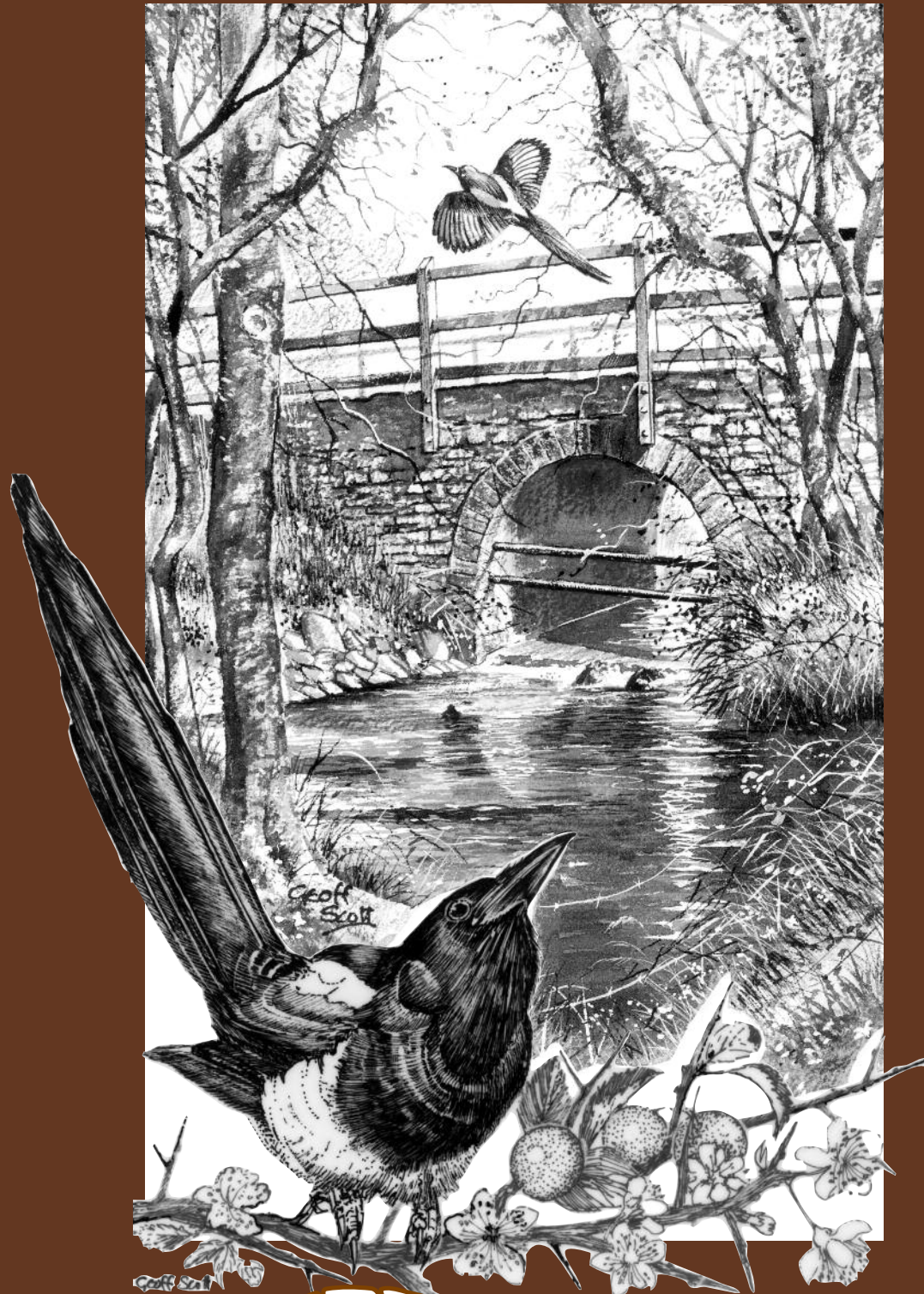


REDBERTH



*Naws am Le
Sense of Place*

Name

Forms similar to the present name existed in the Middle Ages, for example 'Redebord', 'Ridebard' and 'Redbarte'. It may be that these derive from a Welsh name 'rhyd' 'ford'. There was a significant ford in the Carew river on which Redberth lies, at Norchard. Possibly the second element in the name comes from 'y berth' - 'bush': 'Ford by the bush'.

Prehistory

When proposals for the Redberth - Sageston by-pass gave rise to a field survey by Dyfed Archaeological Trust, Ken Murphy discovered a well-preserved earthen round barrow near the Hoyles. This is likely to have been a Bronze Age burial place. It has now been scheduled as an ancient monument by Cadw.

Connections

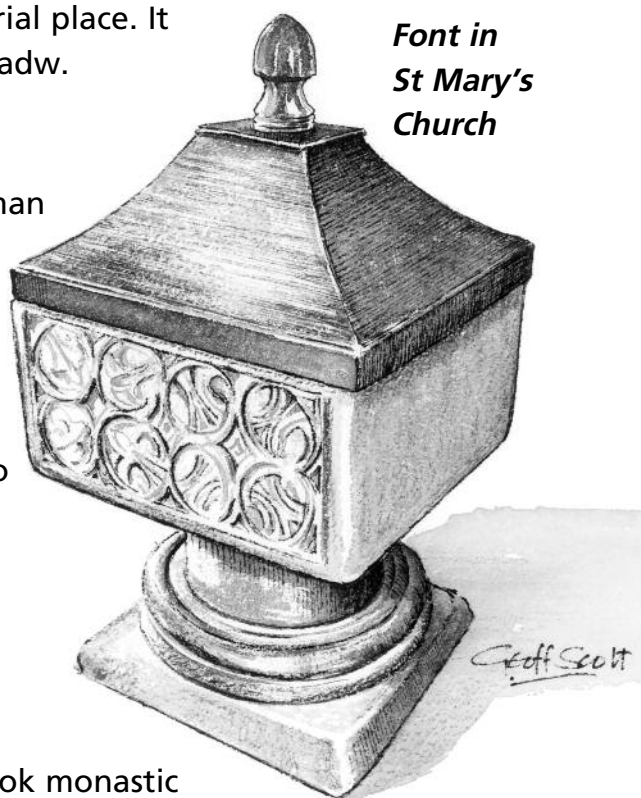
Redberth was a manor of the barony of Carew. A Norman lord of Carew gave Redberth, in its entirety, to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem whose Preceptory was at Slebech near Haverfordwest. This meant that they chose the parish priest and were the land owners. In the reign of Henry VIII, the Preceptory (or Commandery) was dissolved and the property passed to the Crown. It was then leased or sold to a new landowner, probably a member of the Barlow family. In modern times the connection with Carew has been strong, Redberth sometimes being regarded as a Chapelry of Carew. Today it is part of the Community of Carew. Redberth consists of just over 300 acres.

The Knights of St John of Jerusalem (or Hospitallers) took monastic vows and were originally a charitable Order, but developed into a military organisation waging war against the Saracen Turks. They had houses all over Europe, from which estates were managed and recruitment organised.

Tracks and Roads

The centre of the village lies slightly north of the main route from Carmarthen to Pembroke. There are signs of an early road and track system in the village, while to the north-west is a relic route making towards Harrolds in Jeffreyston and beyond, to Minnis Pits. The present A477 follows the line of the nineteenth century turnpike road.

The Tavernspite Turnpike Trust was responsible for road improvements in this district. Previous to an Act of 1828 the main road from the east ran from Cold Inn Cross through East Williamston, past Ridge Farm and on to Redberth Common. There was no road via Broadmoor until the Tavernspite Trust set about road building in this area. The new road joined the old near Redberth Lodge. No information has been discovered as to whether the turnpike road westward was a re-build on the existing line or completely new. A toll gate was set up to recoup some of the cost for the Trust. The toll house is now a private dwelling. Mr T Freeman is said to have been the last keeper.



**Font in
St Mary's
Church**

The Land

In the late eighteenth century the leading land owners were the Barlow family of Lawrenny, but by the middle of the nineteenth century the Barlow holding was down to about 90 acres. Proprietorship was divided between 9 people, some having very small properties. The only owner-occupier was Llewhellin Priday (4 acres). At this time there were 41 acres of common land. One section was crossed by the turnpike road east of the village, and the other by the road to St Florence. Other enclosed land was also regarded as moor. For example, there were 6 fields to the south called 'Horley Moors'. The traditional field names give some indication of the type of farming practised, for example, 7 called 'Sheep Place'.

During the second World War farming was revolutionised with the introduction of the tractor and other machinery, and in the forties and fifties milk production increased. Fame came to Redberth from the bloodstock poultry farm built up by Mr and Mrs F J Thomas at Harcourt House from 1933 onwards.

Coal

Redberth lies at the edge of the Pembrokeshire Coalfield and mining has been one of the local occupations, although there is no tradition of any pits in the parish. One old track led to Jeffreyston where there was coal mining and some locals are said to have worked at Llandegwenit (Carew) till its closure in 1833. One miner only is listed in the 1851 Census - which actually is the date of highest population - 137.

Population

The highest population ever was recorded in 1851, but it included an Irish - born hawker and his family and other travellers living on the common: a reminder that Redberth was a base and one of the calling grounds of gypsies till about 1936.

Blacksmith's shop ruins



Crafts and trades

In 1851 there were 6 shoemakers, 2 tailors, 2 blacksmiths and 1 'shiprite's' wife. Forty years later in a considerably smaller population (84) there were 3 blacksmiths, 1 blacksmith's wife, 1 cooper and 1 mason. Other occupations have included quarrying for building stone. The blacksmith's shop is now a ruin; the last blacksmith to work there was Mr T G Davies who retired in 1963. Many people travelled from Redberth to work at the Royal Naval Dockyard at Pembroke until its closure in 1926.

Business Premises

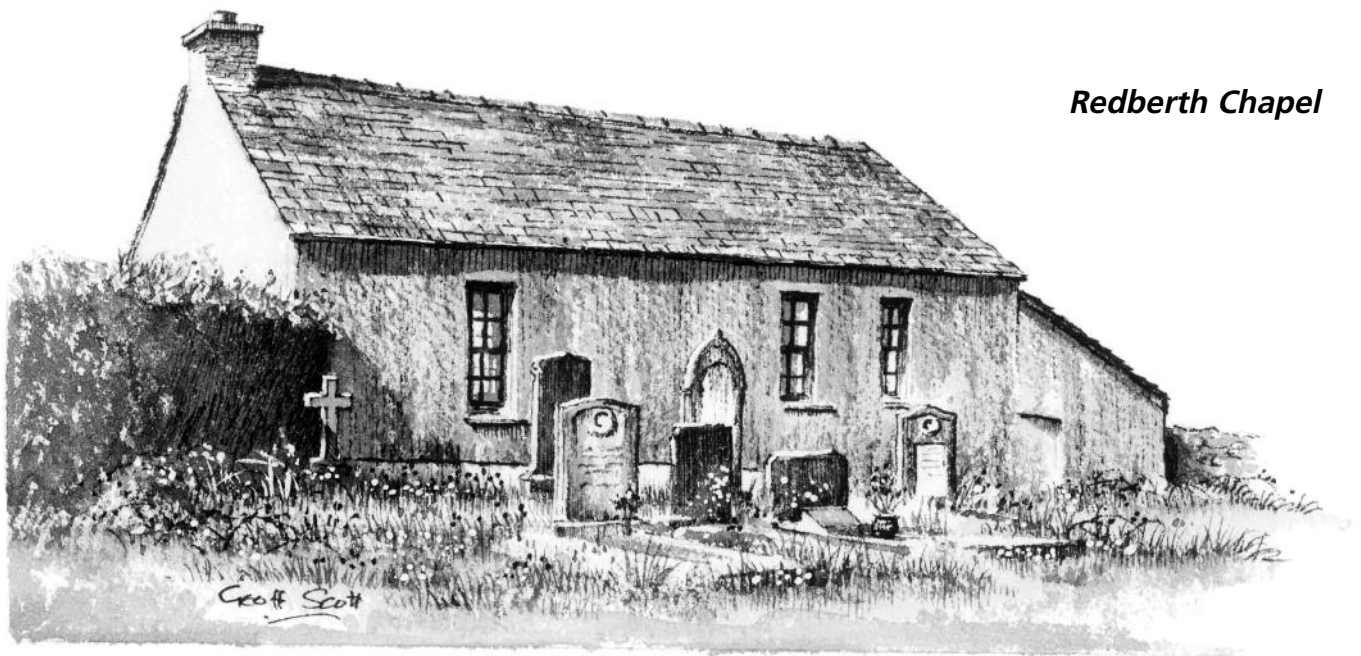
Amongst shops recalled is a sweet shop at Porth Cottage kept by Mr and Mrs Mauchland between the 1930's and 40's and previously by Mrs Beynon. The post office was closed in 1986. There does not seem to have been a public house until the mid 1980's when one existed for a time at Redberth Lodge; this was re-opened in 1994.

Facilities

The well was near the Toll House. This was enclosed in 1934 and a pump installed and in 1948 water was piped to the village. The first bus service, run by Greys Garages of Tenby, commenced in 1930. There was a bus once weekly for Tenby at 11 am on Saturday, returning at 3 pm. The first Council Houses were built in 1953.

Community Activity

One of the memories is of haymaking and harvesting and the suppers which followed, as great social events. Important in contemporary village life is the Womens Institute formed in 1949.



Redberth Chapel

The Chapel

The foundation of the chapel arose in the main from 2 circumstances: the arrival in the area of John Ashley - a Wesleyan preacher and the neglect of the church building and its ministry. John Ashley, a Cornishman, settled in the village following his marriage to Jane Phelps, daughter of Harry Phelps Esq. of Norchard in the parish of Jeffreyeston.

He and his wife worked to improve the moral condition of the locality and religious meetings were held, in the Lodge and elsewhere, at which they preached. In 1822 a cottage and garden owned by Ashley were turned into a chapel. In 1837 the Ashleys moved to Tenby. She died aged 70 in 1842, and he in 1857 (aged 86). They were buried in Redberth Churchyard. Amongst the early enthusiasts was Thomas Howell, who led the Society after the Ashleys moved. His son, Harry Howell (born at Croft Farm in 1835) was a local preacher in the Pembroke Circuit.

During the 20th century the chapel continued to contribute to the spiritual life of the area, and local inhabitants recall the flourishing Sunday School of the pre-war years. Sunday School outings to Saundersfoot, Pendine, Ferryside and Llansteffan are remembered. At Saundersfoot food was prepared by the grown-ups 'and we had the use of a garden of Burgess Bakery leading on to the beach'.

Unfortunately the chapel was closed on 12th May 1985 and is now a dwelling house.

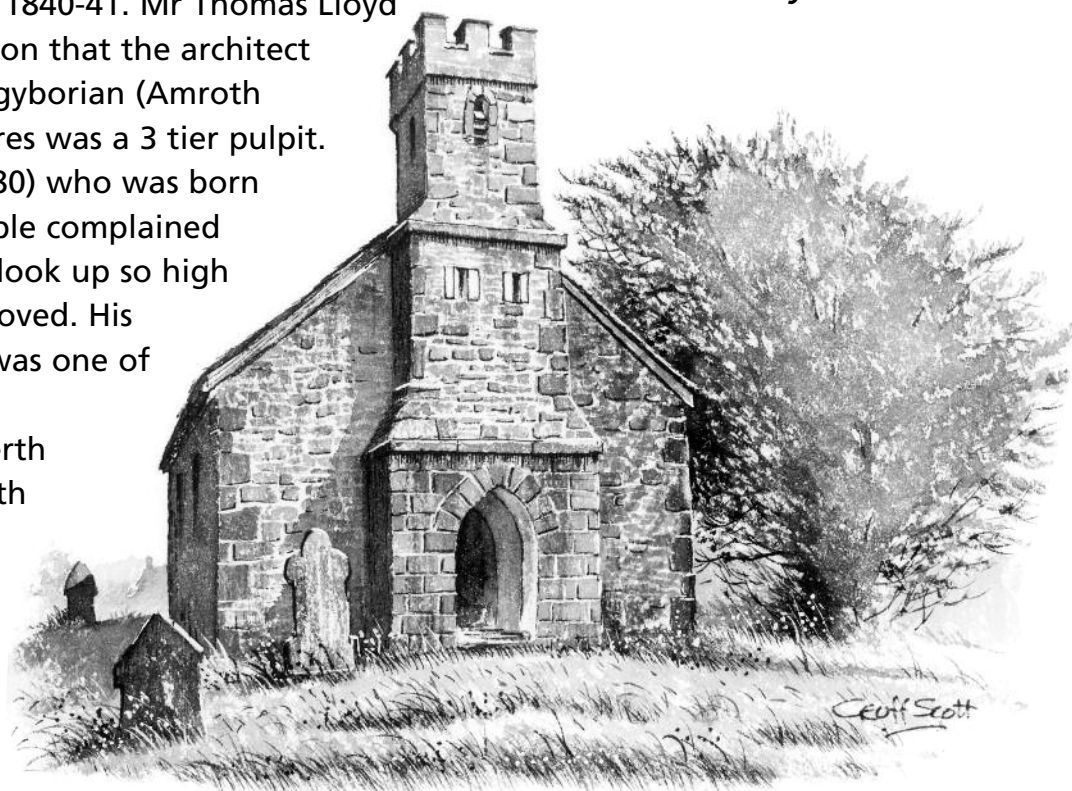
A Benevolent Lady

The moral and educational condition of the people was the great concern of Ann Pitney Thomas who tenanted the Lodge after the Ashleys moved to Tenby. Born at Begelly Rectory on September 30th 1802, the youngest daughter of the Rector, she came to Redberth following the death of her father, the Reverend Thomas Seth Jones Thomas M.A. in 1837. Her background inclined her to good works: both her father's calling and a connection in early life between her mother and John Wesley. She was also a woman of intelligence and initiative who made the right connections to forward her plans. She was involved in the re-building of the church in 1840 and a key figure in the foundation and management of the School, going to live at the School house in 1853. She was also probably something of a puritan: it was to her satisfaction that there was no public house in the village.

St Mary's Church

The church was re-built in 1840-41. Mr Thomas Lloyd has supplied the information that the architect was George Brown of Crugyborian (Amroth parish). Amongst its features was a 3 tier pulpit. Mr Gordon Harries (aged 80) who was born in Redberth tells that people complained that it hurt their necks to look up so high and the top deck was removed. His father Mr Joseph Harries was one of the men who made this alteration; so today Redberth has a 2 tier pulpit. Redberth Church is now amalgamated with Manorbier, St Florence and Jameston.

St Mary's Church



The School

Redberth School was founded in 1842 and in 1845 brought into connection with the National Society. It was re-built in 1853 and served the community until 1953.

Landscape & Wildlife

The soils around Redberth are mainly heavy clay, and there are areas of unimproved wet land, such as Redberth Common which are of little agricultural value.

The Commons, no longer grazed by cattle or sheep, are rapidly becoming overgrown with bracken and brambles, followed by Blackthorn, Gorse

and Willow Scrub. However, parts of the Common are still accessible, and support a wealth of wild flowers

such as Rose-Bay Willow Herb, Foxglove, Red Campion, Speedwell, with Wild Iris, Marsh

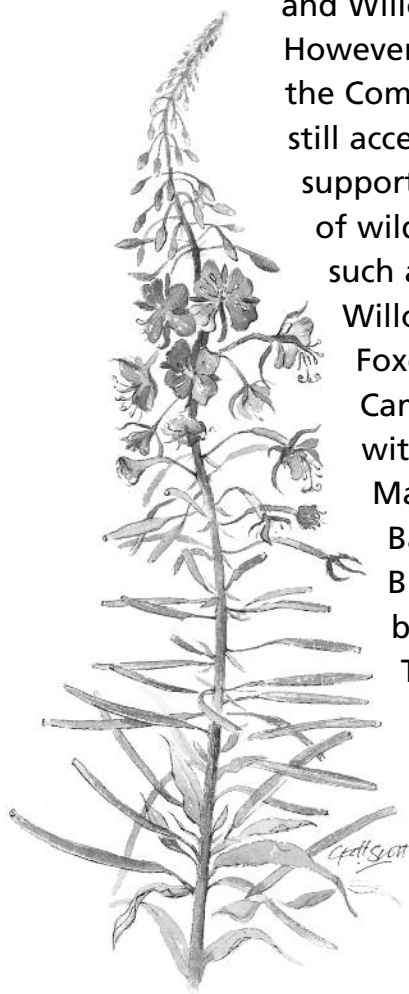
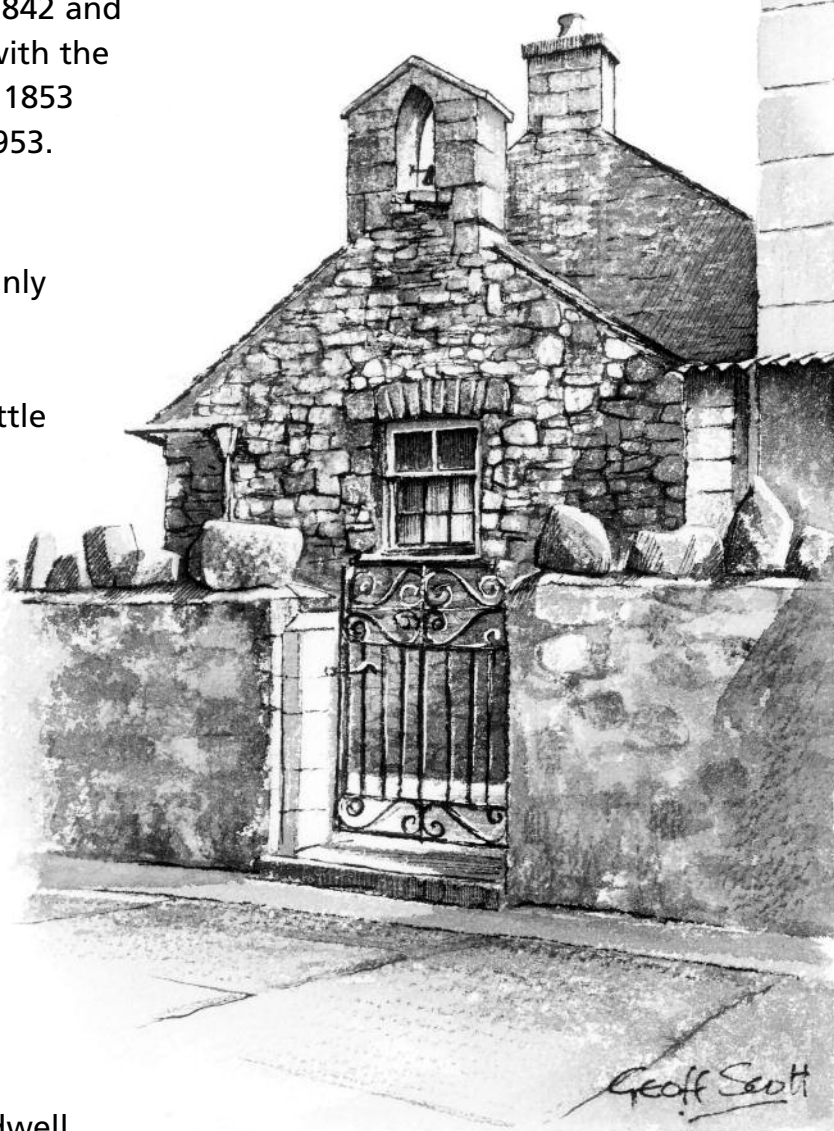
Marigold and Hemlock Water Dropwort in the wetter areas.

Barn Owls, Woodcock and many smaller birds such as Chaffinch, Blackbird and Nuthatch are plentiful, as are many species of butterflies and moths.

The quiet country lanes and footpaths with their high hedgebanks, also support a wealth of wildlife.

Look for the well-worn tracks made by badgers running up the banks and the less distinct runs of rabbits and foxes.

The Old School



Rosebay Willow Herb

Country Code

Respect • Protect • Enjoy

- Be safe - plan ahead and follow any signs.
- Leave gates and property as you find them.
- Protect plants and animals, and take your litter home.
- Keep dogs under close control.
- Consider other people.

Text researched and written by Redberth & District Local History Group
in conjunction with Dyfed Archaeological Trust
Design by Waterfront Graphics
Illustrations by Geoff Scott
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